

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 554

By Womack

A RESOLUTION to commend Dr. Charles E. Smith for his honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee for 38 years, culminating in his service as Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those public servants who have dedicated their professional careers and personal excellence to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Charles E. Smith is one such estimable person who evinces strong integrity and probity in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and Master's and Ph.D. degrees from Peabody College; and

WHEREAS, this fine public servant began his distinguished career as editor of the *Sparta Expositor* in White County in 1961 and was the youngest newspaper editor in the state. During his first year the Tennessee Press Association awarded him for writing the best editorial of the year; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Smith later became managing editor of the *Putnam County Herald* and the *Cookeville Citizen* and news editor of the *Tennessean*; and

WHEREAS, in 1967, he joined the University of Tennessee as editor of the UT News Bureau in Knoxville. The following year he was named the school's Director of Public Relations. He expertly served as executive assistant to the UT Knoxville Chancellor from 1971-73 and as executive assistant to UT President Edward J. Boling from 1973-75; and

WHEREAS, Charles Smith was named Chancellor of UT Nashville and statewide Vice President for Public Service. When UT Nashville was merged with Tennessee State University by court order in 1979, he became editor of the *Nashville Banner*. That same year he rejoined the UT system as Chancellor of the University of Tennessee at Martin; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Smith served as systemwide Vice President of Administration from 1985 until 1987 when he became Commissioner of Education in the cabinet of governor Ned McWherter. As commissioner, he was responsible for drafting, promoting and implementing the governor's 21st Century School Program, Tennessee's very comprehensive kindergarten through 12th grade reform effort; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, he was named Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents for the State University and Community College System, the seventh largest system of post-secondary education in the nation. In that role he presides over 46 campuses, 180,000 students and a budget in excess of one billion dollars; and

WHEREAS, Charles Smith served admirably as chairman of the Weakley County Education Task Force. He is past president of the Tennessee College Association and of the Gulf South Athletic Conference; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Smith served as chairman of the 1983-84 West Tennessee Jobs Conference and was a member of the Founders Committee of Tennesseans for Better Schools; and

WHEREAS, he received a Fulbright Scholar award in the summer of 1980 to lecture at the Federal University of Santa Catarina in Florianapolis, Brazil. In a 1986 national survey he was chosen as one of the nation's top 100 college educators; and

WHEREAS, his numerous additional honors include the 1998 Peabody College Distinguished Alumnus Award. He has been a member of the Peabody Alumni Board since 1994 and served as president of the Board in 1997-98; and

WHEREAS, Charles Smith served on the American College Testing Program Board of Trustees from 1987 to 1993, and, while on the board, he served as chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee and as a member of the Executive Committee; and

WHEREAS, his exemplary service includes two three-year terms as a member of the Southern Regional Education Board and being elected Vice-Chairman for the 1994-95 term. As vice-chairman, he also served as a member of the Executive Committee; and

WHEREAS, throughout his distinguished 38-year career in business and higher education, including his exemplary tenure as Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents, Dr. Smith has distinguished himself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and an exceptional asset to the state of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Charles Smith's outstanding success as a public servant and civic leader is directly attributable to his reliance on the time-honored values of hard work and common sense and his uncommon ability to work well with people from all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Smith epitomizes the ideal of the consummate professional, dedicated public servant and reliable friend and neighbor; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Charles Smith is fortunate to share both love and companionship with his wife, Shawna Lea Hickerson, their two children and four grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, he is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby commend Charles E. Smith for 38 years of honorable and

astute service to the good people of Tennessee as a newspaperman, educator and public servant and salute his unswerving commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.